

Higher Education Sustainability Network Newsletter

Fall 2021

Tennessee's Higher Education Sustainability Initiative serves to provide a network for faculty, administrators, staff, students, and organizations who interact with Tennessee's higher education institutions to come together to collaborate, support, share, and advise on sustainability best practices.

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Campus Food Pantry Grant Recipients Announcement



With a mission to help meet student needs for food assistance,

TDEC's Higher Education Sustainability Initiative offered a mini grant opportunity for higher education institutions. The purpose of the funding is to combat both student food insecurity and food waste by assisting schools with establishing food pantries. To be eligible for the grant, each applicant had to demonstrate an on-campus need for a pantry as well as how the food pantry will divert food from the waste stream by offering food from rescued food sources.

The awardees of the 2021 Campus Food Pantry Grant are two Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) institutions, **TCAT Elizabethton** and **TCAT Jacksboro**. Both institutions are working towards making their campus food pantries available to their students this Fall.

We anticipate a second grant cycle to be offered in August of 2022. Visit our [website](#) for future announcements and to apply. If you represent one of Tennessee's higher education institutions and have an interest in a campus food pantry, we would love to hear from you by taking a few minutes to complete the questionnaire below. The purpose of the questionnaire is to learn about your school's campus food pantry needs to determine how the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation can best support you.

[Campus Food Pantry Questionnaire](#)

2021 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards



The Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards

are presented annually to recognize outstanding achievements by individuals, local governments, businesses, organizations, educational institutions, and agencies for successful environmental projects and conservation measures. Three higher education institutions are winners of the 2021 GESA awards in the following categories:

Tennessee Tech University: Building Green

Trevecca Nazarene University: Environmental Education and Outreach

Vanderbilt University: Energy and Renewable Resources

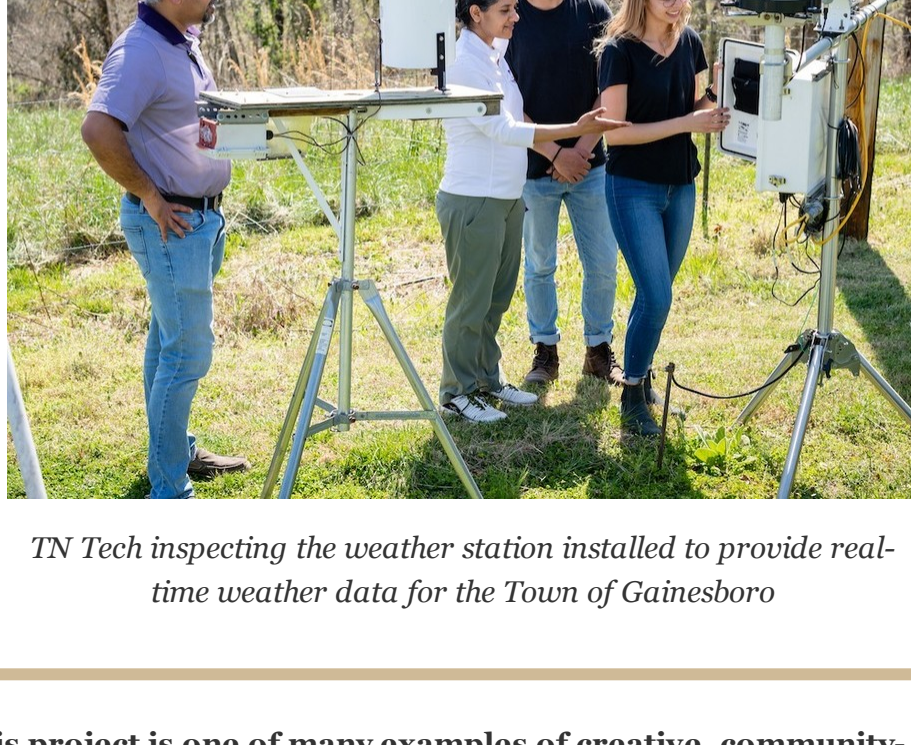
Read more about each of their projects and efforts [here](#).

To learn more about the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards and the different award categories, you can find more information on our website. The 2022 awards application will open January 2022 for projects completed in 2021.

Tennessee Highlight

Tennessee Tech Takes a Watershed Approach to Stormwater Management in the Town of Gainesboro

Effective stormwater management of a community requires a comprehensive understanding of the watershed where it is located. Many studies have implemented the watershed approach to stormwater management. However, Tennessee Tech discovered through research that watershed approaches are not executed in smaller urban communities meaning this application of a watershed study was unique relative to typical practice. Through the Tennessee College and Underserved Community Partnership Program (TN CUPP), Tennessee Tech initiated the development of a watershed-wide stormwater management plan for the Town of Gainesboro, which is a small, rural community in Jackson County, Tennessee. The town of Gainesboro is located within the Doe Creek watershed and experienced significant flooding in June 2018. However, prior to this study, limited data was available to determine the factors contributing to the flooding and other stormwater issues within the Doe Creek watershed. Read more about the project [here](#).



TN Tech inspecting the weather station installed to provide real-time weather data for the Town of Gainesboro

This project is one of many examples of creative, community-specific solutions, which could qualify as a TN CUPP project. If your institution is interested in completing a TN CUPP project, complete this brief questionnaire below, which will be used to help identify a community needing assistance with a qualifying TN CUPP project.

[TN CUPP Questionnaire](#)

National Highlight



Shaw University Aims to Decrease Air Emissions in Environmental Justice Areas of North Carolina

Through the EPA College and Underserved Community Partnership Program (EPA CUPP), North Carolina Department of Air Quality (NC DAQ) is working with Shaw University students, staff, and faculty to promote commuting alternatives and idle reduction campaigns in an effort to decrease air emissions and improve air quality. This project will be focused in an environmental justice area surrounding Shaw University campus. The first task for students is to identify current transportation preferences for faculty and staff at the university. Students will then identify commuting options and alternatives to transportation which can act as a model for future projects in other areas of the state. This project began in June 2021 with a target completion date of December 2021.

Events and Opportunities

LET'S GO
**ZERO WASTE
TENNESSEE**



Zero Waste Day
October 27



Get Involved

October 27th is **Zero Waste Day**, and TDEC and its partners would like to encourage **students** to participate in challenges that support each of the following five waste reduction actions: Re-think, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Re-Earth.

If your higher education institution is interested in becoming a Zero Waste Partner, visit the [Zero Waste TN website](#), or reach out to Kelsey Davis at Kelsey.davis@tn.gov to learn more.

Get Food Smart TN Recognition Program

We would like to invite you to submit an application to join our program. As part of the program, we will not only promote your best practices and successes, but also provide technical assistance to help with any food waste, recovery, and diversion efforts you need help with.

Visit www.getfoodsmarttn.com/content/page/recognize for more information about the program and to apply.

TDEC Grants

Federal Grants

Tennessee State Parks Events

[Campus Race To Zero Waste](#) (Formerly RecycleMania; Registration opens September 2021)

[AASHE Conference](#) (Streaming Live October 12-14, 2021)

[EPA's Cumulative Health Impacts at the Intersection of Climate Change, Environmental Justice, and Vulnerable Populations/Lifestyles: Community-Based Research for Solutions](#)

[EPA's 10th Annual Campus RainWorks Challenge](#) (Registration September 1-October 1, 2021; Entries Due December 10, 2021)

[Project Green Challenge](#) (Register Now; Challenge Dates October 1-30, 2021)

[Tennessee Valley Authority Call for Pilots](#)

Previous Newsletters



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Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

Office of Policy and Sustainable Practices

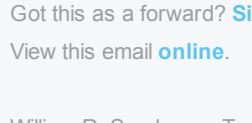
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[Tennessee Higher Education Sustainability Initiative](#)

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